

Lesson Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Lesson ID: 83490-31424

Title: Additional Missions Executed by the 81MM Mortar Platoon

Operation/Exercise Name: WESTPAC 98

Observed: 01 Dec 1998

Originator: BLT 3/1

POC: LT FARAJ      Commercial: (760)725-7004    DSN: 3657004

5. (U) OBSERVATION:

The 81 MM Mortar Platoon was tasked with the following additional missions: Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel, Non-lethal force, and Embassy security/Reinforcement

6. (U) DISCUSSION:

The large unit size and senior SNCO and NCO leadership inherent to an 81MM Mortar platoon made it a natural choice for the BLT commander to execute TRAP's, Non-Lethal, Embassy reinforcement and as a ready Quick Reaction Force. These missions were welcomed as they kept the platoon sharp and always ready for any possible contingency. The possibility does exist in that a platoon will become too focused on the additional missions and lose focus of its primary mission. We prevented that by aggressively scheduling mortar training on a regular basis which took place 3 times a week. Additionally the platoon was task organized to insure that only one section ever had to focus on an additional mission which allowed the other section to continue to conduct conventional Mortar training.

7. (U) LESSON LEARNED:

Mortar platoons are excellent for assignment to additional missions. They have the personnel and assets to conduct a variety of MEU SOC missions with little or no additional support. When assigned additional missions aggressive training must be conducted to insure maintenance of conventional Mortar skills. Keep one section focused on the primary mission to preserve the skill level within the unit

8. (U) RECOMMENDED ACTION:

None.

9. (U) COMMENTS:

None.

\* \* \* \* \*